

# Downed Tree Structure

## Job Sheet

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)  
Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC)  
University of Missouri Extension – The School of Natural Resources

<b>For:</b>	<b>County:</b>
<b>Field(s):</b>	<b>Farm #:</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Tract #:</b>
<b>Designed By:</b>	<b>Contact Information:</b>

### DOWNED TREE STRUCTURES PROVIDE IMMEDIATE WOODY COVER FOR BOBWHITE QUAIL

#### PURPOSE:

Shrubby/woody escape cover is often the missing habitat component for bobwhite quail in most fields managed for early successional wildlife. Downed tree structures provide a temporary source of woody cover in areas where shrubby cover is lacking. Downed tree structures also provide an immediate source of woody cover while new shrub plantings become established. To be effective, place downed tree structures next to early-successional vegetation such as managed wildlife friendly grasses/legumes, field borders, food plots or cropland.



#### SPECIFICATIONS:

- Create 0.1 acre to 1.0 acre of dense woody cover per 5-40 acres of wildlife friendly habitat. The minimum size of a downed tree structure is 30'X50' and a total of 1500 square feet in size. It takes three downed tree structures of this size to equal 0.1 acre. For optimal quail habitat the downed tree structures should be no more than 150' apart and will be placed next to early successional vegetation such as managed wildlife friendly grasses/legumes, field borders, food plots or cropland.
- Choose a minimum of 8 well branched, durable trees that are at least 20 feet in height (do not count the unbranched trunk). When complete, the downed tree structure will cover at least 1500 square feet with interlaced branches, regardless of individual tree heights used for construction. Oak, hickory, cedar and Osage orange make good downed tree structures. Elm, cottonwood and willow do not make good down tree structures.
- Downed trees should not be pushed into dense brush piles. These structures are intended to be "open" for quail use. Simply drag the downed trees and place in a loose arrangement.
- Kill existing grass/vegetation (regardless of type) before installing downed tree structures with an approved herbicide. This provides good growing conditions for annual food plants and shrubs.
- Downed tree structures should be used to enhance new shrub plantings or placed in large fields or field borders with inadequate shrubby cover.
- For additional benefits, plant shrubs in and around structures. Plant shrub dogwoods, American plum, blackberry, indigo bush or aromatic sumac. A mix of plants provides greater vegetative diversity.

### MAINTENANCE:

- Exclude livestock from downed tree structures.
- Use herbicides to suppress invasive vegetation and to control noxious weeds.
- Over time downed trees will eventually deteriorate. Enhance each structure by periodically adding more downed trees.
- Protect downed tree structures from prescribed burning by disk firebreaks around each structure prior to the prescribed burn.

### PRIMARY HABITAT CONSIDERATIONS:

- Provide a natural cover source for quail and other wildlife.

Consult with NRCS, MDC, or University Extension for additional recommendations.

Comment:



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